

## Coop Founding Meeting

Over the course of three days, from February 9th to 11th, 2012, the Coop interim committee met with Mr. Martin Gagnon, Cooperative de Développement Régional to help prepare for the Coop Solidarité Bioproduits founding meeting. Mr. Gagnon was present to oversee the structuring of the new Coop which included reviewing by-laws, policies, and preparing the necessary formwork.

The Coop Solidarité Bioproduits Founding Meeting was held on February 10th in St. Paul's River, Quebec. Thank you to everyone who attended. The Coop Board of Directors was elected; Kimberly Buffitt, President, Hugh Maynard, Vice-President, James Buckle, Treasurer and Coasters Association Representative, Tyler Buckle, Secretary, Leona Griffin, Worker Representative, and Ashley Morency, CLD Representative. The date for the first meeting of the new board of directors will be forthcoming, with a seat still open on the board that needs to be filled by a worker representative.

If you are interested in becoming a part of the Coop Board of Directors, or would like to become a member of the Coop, please contact the Coop at 1-877-LNSCOOP. The Coop membership drive will begin soon, so look for additional information in the coming weeks.



Coop Solidarité Bioproduits de la Basse-Côte-Nord Founding Meeting, February 10th, 2012.

## Cooperative Solidarite Bioproduits Communications Development Agent

On October 31st, 2011, with funding from CRÉ (Conférence régionale des élus de la Côte-Nord), a Communications Development Agent, Faye Bilodeau, was hired under the Start-up Initiative for Wildberry and NTFP Co-operative for six months.

The role of the Communication Agent is to assist in developing a marketing and branding campaign for the new Coop Solidarite Bioproduits. A special focus will be placed on creating an appropriate image for the new Coop, one that takes into account all the qualities it wishes to be identified with.

Three Coop newsletters will be distributed in the six month time frame. Each newsletter will highlight the important work that is being done to establish a solid foundation for the new Coop. Information on the initial groundwork that was laid (i.e. funding, partners) from 2009 to present for the Coop will be published. The newsletters will also emphasize the contributions made by the population of the Lower North Shore and the continuing support that will be needed.

A temporary Coop webpage is also being developed. It will be linked to the Coasters Association website. This page will operate until the Coop is able to build and launch its own site.

An additional tool being developed is the promotional folder. It will contain background information about the Coop, Newsletters, Coop products, and advertising/promotional material such as business cards, postcards, newsletters and photos. These folders will be used to market the Coop and its products to potential investors, buyers and customers.

If you have any comments or questions please feel free to contact Faye Bilodeau, Communications Development Agent at 418 379-2006 ext 224 or by email at fbcoasters@explornet.com.

---

## Coop Funding Timeline

We would like to thank our many financial sponsors for contributing towards the success of this project.

An original project entitled, "Revival and Diversification of Northern Resource Activities and Exploitation on the Lower North Shore" was approved in July 2009 by Ministère des Affaires Municipales, des Régions et de L'occupation du Territoire (MAMROT). MAMROT committed to a contribution of \$500,000 over five years, ending March 31, 2014. This funding provided the base for the wildberry development project.

In January of 2010, Canada Economic Development (CED) approved a project entitled, "Development of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFP) on the Lower North Shore." CED approved an amount of \$393,901 for 27 months, ending March 31, 2012. The CLD Basse-Côte-Nord approved \$5,000 towards the development of a feasibility study. Also in 2010, Emploi Québec contributed \$55,860 towards the hiring of 12 employees to work on various aspects of the project, MRC du Golfe-du-Saint-Laurent contributed \$29,803 towards product development and a feasibility study, Young Canada Works and Services Canada contributed \$1,920 and \$2,690 respectively towards the hiring of 2 summer students.

The Council of Mayors/MRC du Golfe-du-Saint-Laurent, in partnership with the Municipality of Bonne Esperance, have contributed \$64,840 towards wildberry and NTFP inventories in 2010 and 2011.

In 2011 Emploi Quebec and MRC du Golfe-du-Saint-Laurent approved \$4,704 and \$11,762 towards the hiring of 4 employees to receive training on product development. Also in 2011, Conférence Régionale des Élus (CRE) de la Côte-Nord and La Ministère de Développement Économique, de L'innovation et de L'Exportation (MDEIE) joined the project by approving contributions of \$73,113 and \$61,313 respectively. The CLD Basse-Côte-Nord also approved an amount of \$12,420 towards a greenhouse feasibility study.

## Berry Picking: Building a Sustainable Sector\*



Most berry pickers have been picking since they could walk. Who hasn't gone out behind the cabin and over a hill to get a cup of freshly picked bakeapples for a treat? In this new age, where berry picking has become a source of income for many during the summer months, the demand for berries has been growing annually. This is why it is important to remember that like all Lower North Shore natural resources, care must be taken to treat berry sites with respect and consideration. This is to ensure the berries will remain year after year, ready for harvesters, producers and consumers to continue developing this exciting market.

There are many ways to harvest berries while still reducing the impact on the surrounding environment. Most are implanted in local berry pickers from an early age; do not leave trash behind, don't step on or drive over the berry plants, and pick from clean sites, not beside the road or garbage dumps.

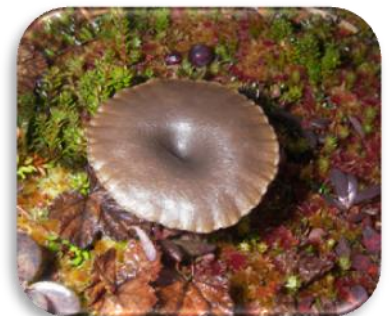
Some other harvesting techniques for berry picking and other NTFP harvesting you may like to know more about include:



- Never harvest plants considered endangered or at risk;
- Don't harvest in parks, or on Native reserves or private land without permission. Where they exist, follow laws and conventions regarding where, what, and how to harvest;
- Be moderate - harvest only what you can use (or have a market for). Suggestions for the percentage of plants to harvest from one site range from 2% to 25%; in areas with many harvesters, 25% may be too high, in areas where no one else picks 2% may be conservative. Don't harvest areas with very few plants and avoid sensitive sites such as bogs and stream edges;
- Harvest the right plants and the right parts to avoid waste. In general, avoid harvesting entire plants. 'Know your plants' - including how they reproduce - so you can harvest them in a way that maintains populations, rather than diminishes them. Return to harvested sites to learn and refine your practices;
- When harvesting medicine or food, avoid roadsides, areas treated with pesticides, or other potentially contaminated sites. If harvesting for sale, learn about the end uses of your product and how to protect those who use them;
- Think about other users including those harvesting or using the forest for cultural, subsistence, or recreational purposes.



If harvesters take responsibility (and most do) to educate themselves and each other on sustainable harvesting, we can minimize the mistakes that trouble many industries based on natural resources. All of us that harvest from the wild should keep in mind the word *respect*: respect for the resources we harvest, respect for others who use them, respect for the ecosystems we depend on, and respect for what we still need to learn about sustainable use. By working together and taking a long-term perspective, we can guarantee wild resources are available for all to enjoy, now and into the future.



\* (Some information provided by Royal Roads University)

## Lower North Shore Wildberry Jelly Taste Testing

From November 26<sup>th</sup> to December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2011, Wildberry Jellies taste testing sessions were held in eight communities on the Lower North Shore (Lourdes de Blanc Sablon, St. Paul's River, Old Fort Bay, St. Augustine, La Tabatiere, Harrington Harbour, Chevery and Kegaska). These jellies are the first products to be produced and sold for the new Lower North Shore Bio Products Solidarity Coop.

The taste tastings were held at various community events that took place during the recent holiday season. Testers of all ages were invited to sample the many delicious, authentic Wildberry flavors; redberry, squashberry, marshberry and bakeapple. Those who filled out a short survey, available at each taste testing session, were entered in a draw for a beautiful basket of local handicrafts, preserves and Wildberry Jellies. Congratulations to Sherri Joncas of Old Fort Bay, winner of the taste testing draw!

A big thank you goes out to all those who helped with the taste testing in the communities, Tyler Buckle, Ana Osborne, Allie Vatcher, Elisa Martin, Marsha Chubbs-Shattler, and Janice Robertson. Many thanks to the schools and community groups that allowed us to hold the taste testing sessions at Christmas concerts, craft fairs and local events. Lastly, many thanks to everyone who took the time to sample the Wildberry Jellies. Your feedback is greatly appreciated and will aid the Coop in developing new products for the future.



*Sherri Joncas showing her basket of local crafts and preserves, and of course, yummy Wildberry jellies!  
Congratulations and enjoy!*

For more information by mail:

**Cooperative Solidarite Bioproduits de la Basse-Côte-Nord**  
P.O. Box 10 • Riviere St-Paul • Quebec • Canada • G0G 2P0